

It should be noted that Ashworth's sounding boards 3, 4 are spaced apart (by about 2", according to column 3, line 50), and that opening 7 has a length equal only to the thickness of the sounding board 3 (only 3/16" according to column 3, lines 46-47). Such a short opening cannot simultaneously be said to extend "*from and beyond the vicinity* of the sound source [4, 5] and hav[e] a termination portion positioned *remotely from* the sound source," as recited in claim 1 (emphasis added). The Ashworth disclosure thus does not meet each and every limitation of claim 1, so the rejection must be withdrawn.

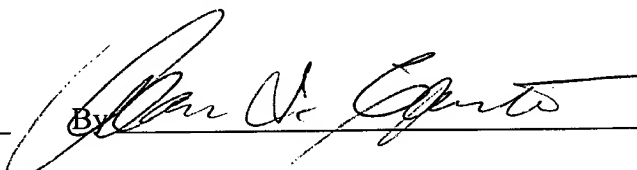
Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date JAN 12 2004

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